

REMARKS

Applicants reply to the Office Action dated July 25, 2006 with a two-month extension of time. Claims 1-6, 8, 10, and 17-22 were pending in the application and the Examiner rejects claims 1-6, 8, 10, and 17-22. Support for the amendments may be found in the originally-filed specification, claims, and figures. No new matter has been introduced by these amendments. Applicants assert that the application is in condition for allowance and reconsideration of the pending claims is requested.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

The Examiner rejects claim 8 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctively claim the subject matter that Applicants regard as their invention. Specifically, the Examiner asserts that, “[t]he term ‘fee reconciliation information’ in claim 8 is a relative term which renders the claim indefinite” (page 3, item 4). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

The specification clearly defines “reconciliation information” in, for example, paragraph [0077], which recites that, “reconciliation information may include, for example, the ticket number, record locator, or date of the flight. More or less information may be provided as appropriate, as discussed below with reference to several example-billing statements.” Further details regarding reconciliation information may be found in paragraph [0078], which discusses Airline Billing Account statements in accordance with the present invention.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Examiner rejects claim 3 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Acebo et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,023,679 (“Acebo”). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Acebo generally discloses a system for enabling real-time access to pre-ticketed travel data. Specifically, the Acebo system allows an entity, such as a corporation, to retrieve pre-ticketed information relating to its employees from a Computerized Reservations System (CRS), store the information in a local database, and perform an analysis to determine travel spending and optimization. According to Acebo, existing systems enable an entity to view information from a CRS, however the information is not stored locally and is not represented in real-time, thereby leading to an inaccurate analysis.

Acebo seeks to overcome the disadvantages of the prior art by providing real-time access to pre-ticketed information, wherein a locally operated computer retrieves the information from a

Passenger Name Record (PNR) on the CRS. Acebo further discloses a number of relational database tables for storing the pre-ticketed information. For example, Figure 23 of Acebo shows a chart of accounts table that maintains information relevant to how a travel charge will be posted. However, this table is relevant only to the travel agent's accounting system in that it defines how sales (i.e., travel bookings on behalf of clients) will be entered in various charts. The chart of accounts table does not define how a travel cost and its associated variety of fees will be billed to the client (e.g., the accounts that travel cost and various related fees will be posted against). Acebo also discloses a taxes and fees table (*see*, Figure 12). However, note that the table does not include a field for identifying an account to which the taxes and/or fees will be billed to. Thus, it would not be possible according to Acebo to post varying types of taxes and fees relating to a travel transaction to varying accounts. As such, Acebo does not disclose or suggest at least, "obtaining a user profile comprising allocation information, wherein said allocation information defines a plurality of fees with a corresponding plurality of accounts," and "charging said plurality of fees and said cost to a first account and a second account according to said user profile" as recited by independent claim 3.

The Examiner rejects claim 1 and states that, "claim 1 is substantially similar to claim 3, and follows the same rejection" (page 4, paragraph 3). Applicants assert that claim 1 is differentiated from the cited reference for at least the same reasons as set forth above in reference to claim 3, as well as in view of its own respective features.

The Examiner next rejects claims 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Acebo et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,023,679 ("Acebo"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Applicants assert that claim 17 is differentiated from the cited reference for at least the same reasons as set forth above in reference to claim 3, as well as in view of their own respective features.

The Examiner rejects claims 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 18, 19, 21, and 22 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Acebo et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,023,679 ("Acebo"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claims 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 18, 19, 21, and 22 variously depend from independent claims 1, 3, and 17, therefore claims 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 18, 19, 21, and 22 are differentiated from the cited reference for at least the same reasons as set forth above, as well as in view of its own respective features.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner rejects claim 20 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Acebo in view of Examiner's official notice. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

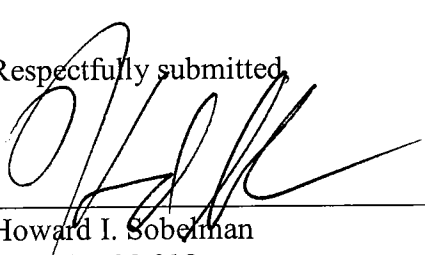
The Examiner correctly states that, "Acebo fails to explicitly disclose the step of charging said fee to a different account than the account used to charge for the cost of said travel related purchase" (page 8 item 8). However, the Examiner asserts that, "it is old and well known in the art to charge different items to different accounts" (page 8, item 8).

Applicants appreciate that the practice of accounting involves the designation of a number of accounts in order to track payables and receivables. However, the presently claimed invention goes way beyond standard accounting practices. In that regard, the Examiner's official notice does not address the automatic designation of costs and fees as disclosed by independent claim 17, from which claim 20 depends. Therefore, Applicants assert that claim 20 is differentiated from the cited reference for at least the same reasons as set forth above in reference to claim 17, as well as in view of its own respective features.

Applicants respectfully submit that the pending claims are in condition for allowance. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees, which may be required, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. **19-2814**. Applicants invite the Examiner to telephone the undersigned if the Examiner has any questions regarding this Reply or the present application in general.

Respectfully submitted,

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